

BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT – EDUCATION AND TRAINING SECTION
LESSON PLAN

COURSE TITLE: Community Policing (In-Service)

LESSON TITLE: Module 4 – Informal Engagement

PREPARED BY:

DATE:

REVIEWED BY:

DATE:

APPROVED BY: Gary Cordner


DATE:



TIME FRAME	PARAMETERS
<p>Total Lesson Hours: 1</p> <p>Day/Time: Day 1, 1300-1400</p>	<p>Audience: In-Service Training, Sworn personnel of all ranks</p> <p>Number: 36 max/20 min <i>(Specify Max/Min if applicable)</i></p> <p>Space(s): Classroom</p>
PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUE
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Through a case study and facilitated discussion, participants will be able to give examples, to the satisfaction of the facilitator, of informal community engagement. 2. Students will be able to give examples of how everyday principles and practices apply to community policing, to the satisfaction of the facilitator, through case studies and facilitated discussion. 	<p>Case Studies</p> <p>Facilitated Discussion</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">MPCTC OBJECTIVES <i>(Ensure all objectives mentioned here are also added to the "Instructor Notes" column where they are addressed in the lesson)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">n/a</p>	

<p style="text-align: center;">INSTRUCTOR MATERIALS</p> <p>Lesson plan PowerPoint</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">EQUIPMENT/SUPPLIES NEEDED</p> <p>Classroom with grouped tables Computer/projector or smartboard Internet access</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">STUDENT HANDOUTS</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">METHODS/TECHNIQUES</p> <p>Lecture Class discussion Case studies Group exercise / role-play</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">REFERENCES</p> <p>Austen, B. 2018. “Peace Officers” (June 21). Online at https://newrepublic.com/article/148854/peace-officers.</p> <p>Baltimore Police Department. 2020. Community Policing Plan. Baltimore, MD: author. Online at https://www.baltimorepolice.org/0cp1-draft-community-policing-plan.</p> <p>NeighborWorks America. 2015. Community Policing Done Right: Ken Grubbs” (August 20). Online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MrM7jA9OkSM.</p> <p>Temple University. 2015. “Philadelphia Foot Patrol Experiment” (November 17). Online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0NUQsK0vnnM.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">GENERAL COMMENTS</p> <p>This is Lesson 4 of a 2-day course on community policing for in-service personnel.</p>

LESSON PLAN: Community Policing (Module 4)

TITLE: Informal Engagement

PRESENTATION GUIDE	TRAINER NOTES
<p>I. ANTICIPATORY SET</p> <p>In this hour we'll discuss the first component of community policing, informal engagement. We'll provide examples and look at some case studies from other cities. We'll also review some everyday principles and practices that you can use when engaging members of the community.</p> <p>Before we get into the specifics of informal engagement, we want to hear some of the ways you have built relationships with the community.</p> <p>ASK: What does Community Policing mean to you?</p> <p>ASK: What are some of the ways you have built relationships with the community?</p>	<p>Time: 5 minutes</p> <p><i>The facilitators should briefly introduce themselves, including their police experience and any experience or expertise directly related to this training. (Unless this was already done for an earlier lesson.)</i></p> <p>Slide 1</p>  <p>Desired Responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement through community meetings • Teaching and coaching at schools • Block parties • Building relationships with community members to solve problems • Following up on complaints • Coordinating with partners on complaints <p>Desired Responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foot patrol • Interacting with youth through playing and

<p>Performance Objectives Throughout this course we will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize and provide examples of informal engagement. • Discuss examples of how everyday principles and practices apply to community policing. 	<p>speaking to them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through business checks • Through school checks • Answering questions and engaging in conversation • Working together to solve problems <p>Slide 2</p> 
<p>II. INSTRUCTIONAL INPUT (CONTENT)</p> <p>Slide 3 As a reminder, there are four basic components of community policing highlighted in BPD's Community Policing Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal engagement • Daily problem solving • Formal engagement • Problem-oriented policing <p>We'll talk about the first one in this module. Next hour we'll talk about daily problem solving, and tomorrow we'll cover the other two.</p> <p>Let's talk about the first component, informal community engagement. Basically, this refers to proactive, voluntary, positive interactions with members of the community.</p> <p>ASK: What are some examples of informal community engagement that you have seen?</p>	<p>Time: 45 minutes (includes 13 minutes of video)</p> <p>Slide 3</p> <p>Basic Components of Community Policing</p>  <p><i>Note: Do not put the next slide up yet.</i></p> <p>Elicit a variety of examples, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business checks. • Talking to kids on their way to school.

It makes a lot of sense for police to maximize their positive contacts with people. Some officers have

- Constant running around and answering calls
- Fatigue
- Some officers are not community-oriented
- Some officers don't know what to say
- Some community members don't want to talk to us
- Not wanting to get into an argument with community members
- Not wanting to be criticized by peers

indicated that positive interactions help them get through more difficult times. It feeds their needs as much as the needs of a community member.

It's inevitable that members of the public will have some contacts with police that they see as negative. Maybe they get a ticket or get arrested, or they see their parents get arrested, or they call the police for something but it turns out the police can't do much for them. Or they just hear about something, or see a video from somewhere. The smart thing for us to do is build up a reservoir of positive contacts to help overcome or reduce those negative ones.

Two other points are worth mentioning:

- It's good for police to be seen, but that's not enough. We don't want to be perceived as outsiders who are *watching the community*. We make a bigger impact when we *engage as a positive part of the community*.
- Authentic engagements help to sustain the trust that is built from showing residents that police are human and we care about their concerns.

Of course, it's one thing to say make more contacts, and another thing to successfully carry out positive contacts. Not everybody wants to talk to the police, and others, for a variety of reasons, may be distrusting of law enforcement. In this hour we'll cover a few principles and practices that can help, such as interpersonal communication, emotional intelligence, and procedural justice.

Don't forget why we're emphasizing this. Remember what Baltimore residents said in those focus groups – they want police to interact more with residents, get more involved, walk foot patrols, and get to know neighborhoods better. Informal engagement is the main way that we can accomplish that.

Slide 5

Speaking of foot patrol -- it can be used to increase informal community engagement. Foot patrol isn't the



Informal Community Engagement

- Building relationships
- Maximizing positive interactions
- More than just being seen – authentic engagement, interaction, conversation
- Being consistent
- Businesses and individuals
- Every officer, every day

Slide 5

only way to engage with the community, but it definitely helps when officers get out of their patrol cars.

Getting out of the car breaks down the barrier of separation that the community feels when officers are only in cars. Officers in cars can seem like they're just driving by and maybe keeping an eye on things. It's the difference between just watching the community and becoming a part of it. Foot patrol can provide a positive presence when officers use it to multiply informal community engagement.

Slide 6

Most of us assume that foot patrol is just a "feel good" strategy and doesn't really make a difference. But studies over the years have shown that it does have positive effects:

- the public likes foot patrol
- it makes them feel safer, and
- it improves their opinion of the police.

So there's reason to think that foot patrol is helpful in building public trust. But does it have any impact on crime? Earlier studies showed mixed results on that, but the single best study of foot patrol, done in Philadelphia, was definitely very promising.

Let's watch this 5-minute case study about the Philadelphia foot patrol experiment. Take note of how they did the study and what they found.

ASK: What is your opinion of foot patrols? Are they effective in building community relationships and deterring crime?

Foot Patrol

- Get out of the patrol car as much as you can.
- Foot patrol provides a "felt presence."
- Foot patrol leads to informal community engagement.
- Studies consistently show that foot patrol makes people feel safer & the public likes it.
- Philadelphia Foot Patrol Experiment in 2009 found 23% reduction in violent crime.



Slide 6

CASE STUDY: Philadelphia Foot Patrol



The video is embedded on this slide.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0NUQsK0vnnM>.

Important – don't play the whole video. Just play from the start to the 5:05 mark (5 minutes, 5 seconds).

Expected Responses:

- It's just public relations – but the Philadelphia study shows that's not true.
- It only works in nice neighborhoods – but the Philadelphia study was

<p>It's worth noting that this was a well-done study. It was an experiment, meaning there were control groups. It was a big study – they started with 120 hot spots, and randomly picked 60 to add foot patrols. And the target areas were residential neighborhoods, not business districts.</p> <p>Another interesting feature of this study in Philadelphia was that it aimed to have an impact on how young officers looked at the community. Because they were walking in residential neighborhoods, the officers learned an important lesson – even in areas with higher levels of crime, most of the residents were not offenders or trouble makers. Sometimes, officers who only patrol in cars don't recognize this, and it's easy to become jaded. Foot patrol and informal community engagement can help officers develop a more accurate and balanced understanding of the people they serve.</p> <p>Before we move, let's make a point about not getting fixated on foot patrol. Yes, it's effective, but is it the only way to make informal engagements happen?</p> <p>ASK: How else can patrol officers initiate informal engagement?</p>	<p>exclusively done in hot spots, not nice neighborhoods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foot patrol is too inefficient – but if, as this study showed, it reduces crime, as well as makes residents feel safer and improves public trust, that's a lot of positive outcomes. • But we just don't have time for foot patrol – it's true that foot patrol takes time. It's up to BPD Command to find the time for foot patrol, and then up to officers to implement it in a meaningful, thoughtful, authentic way. <p><i>Look for:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Get out the car, even if just for a few minutes.</i> • <i>Stop in businesses and talk to</i>
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ASK: What about others, not in patrol? What can DAT, DDU, other detectives do that increases positive contacts with the community?

Slide 7

Here's another case study, this one featuring a police sergeant in Boston who clearly takes community engagement to heart, just as many BPD members do. While viewing, think about what it took for Sgt. Grubbs to form those relationships. Also be thinking about whether you have personal relationships with individual community members and what you could do to build and sustain those relationships.

ASK: What do you think it took for Sgt. Grubbs to form those relationships? How long do you think it took?

EXPLAIN: He was fully invested in that community. He had individual connections and group connections. Informal and formal. OK, maybe he wasn't always in compliance with regulations regarding his police uniform. The community didn't seem to mind.

ASK: Show of hands - How many of you feel like you have personal relationships with individual community members like Sergeant Grubbs has? Would anyone like to describe such an experience, including what it took to form that relationship?

Something important to recognize is that police who know the people in the neighborhoods and understand

people.

- When handling calls, take the extra minute to talk to people.
- Make a point of talking to kids, seniors, postal workers etc.
- Get to know the people who frequent the streets you patrol.

Look for:

- Don't pass up any opportunities to have positive contacts with the public.

Slide 7

CASE STUDY: Boston Police Sergeant & Community



The 5-minute video is embedded on this slide.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MrM7jA9OkSM>.

Desired Responses:

- Investment of time....a week or a year depending on officer
- Word spreads quickly about officers who have good relationships

Look for:

- Seek examples from patrol officers and detectives, to show that formal engagement isn't limited to NCOs or commanders.

the communities they police can deploy appropriate resources, proactively discover problems, and find community partners to help improve safety over the long run.

In other words, informal engagement can lead to very tangible benefits for police and for the community. It can help achieve community-centered policing, where residents and police partner to prevent crime and to integrate officers into the fabric of the community in order to proactively hear about and solve problems.

Being successful at community engagement requires “soft skills” – what we sometimes call social skills or people skills. We’ll talk about them next.

Slide 8

You should be pretty familiar with **procedural justice** from previous e-learnings and in-class training.

Procedural justice is ultimately about fairness and consistency in both the process and outcomes of policing interactions. When the public perceives interactions as fair, these interactions contribute to public trust and legitimacy. As you know, there are four main elements of treating people fairly:

- Treating people with dignity and respect. Treating others as you would want to be treated.
- Giving people “voice” – which means letting them have their say, and really listening to them. Letting them explain. Taking their perspective into consideration.
- Being neutral and impartial – not showing favoritism, not letting bias affect what you do. Being transparent by explaining what you’re doing and why.
- Demonstrating trustworthiness – being reliable, dependable, professional. Showing that you can be counted on to do the right thing.

ASK: What’s the connection of procedural justice to

Slide 8

Procedural Justice
We want people to feel that they have been treated fairly:

- Dignity & respect
- Voice
- Impartiality
- Trustworthiness



<p>community policing?</p> <p>Let's watch this short case study that illustrates using procedural justice in an investigative stop. We wouldn't consider this an informal engagement, but the principles of procedural justice apply in both cases.</p> <p>ASK: What elements of procedural justice did the officer demonstrate in this encounter?</p> <p>Slide 9 Interpersonal skills are invaluable in policing. The best officers tend to be good at talking, listening, and influencing people informally. When officers are good at listening, speaking, asking questions, explaining, and identifying solutions, they don't have to rely on formal authority as much. Strong interpersonal skills help officers develop better relationships with community</p>	<p><i>Look for:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>During informal and formal engagements, follow the principles of procedural justice. Not everyone will be a fan of the police as there is a lot of history and damaged relationships between the police and certain communities, but following these principles can help build trust.</i> • <i>Also, following procedural justice when handling calls, making stops, investigating crimes, etc. helps build trust – we should follow these principles consistently in all aspects of our work.</i> <p><i>BPD recently produced an e-learning/video on procedural justice. We will insert a segment of that video here. It shows an officer stopping a man who fits the description of a crime that just occurred.</i></p> <p><i>Look for:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>She treated the man with respect.</i> • <i>She listened to his explanation.</i> • <i>She explained why she was stopping him.</i> • <i>She remained calm, non-accusatory, and let him go as soon as it was clear he was not the suspect.</i> <p>Slide 9</p>
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members, which helps build trust.

It's pretty easy to walk into a business and chat with a cashier, or stop to talk to a senior citizen waiting to cross the street. Those kinds of informal engagements are important and they help build trust, but they're not usually very difficult.

Here's a common scenario. BPD gets a call from a convenience store that there's a kid hanging around out front, not doing anything but his presence is bothering customers. BPD dispatches an officer.

ASK: How would you handle it?

ASK: Suppose the officer arrived on the scene and said "Hey kid, get out of here. Beat it. Now." How well would that work?

Interpersonal Skills

Developing and using skills that help you interact positively with all kinds of people:

- Clear communication
- Active listening
- Appropriate body language
- Showing interest in others
- Respect for cultural differences
- Respect for differences of opinion



Look for:

- *Use some interpersonal skills.*
- *Use procedural justice.*
- *Show respect.*
- *Observe the situation to assess whether the youth is "bothering customers." Is he obstructing pedestrian traffic or doing anything else that is unlawful?*
- *Talk to the staff in the convenience store to find out more specifically what their complaint is.*
- *Talk to the kid and let him explain what he's doing.*
- *Listen to the kid.*
- *If the kid is obstructing pedestrians or doing anything else unlawful, explain why he can't continue that behavior.*

Look for:

- *Probably would eliminate the immediate problem.*

Slide 10

The LAST acronym is one that might be helpful in situations like the scenario we just looked at. It reminds us to use certain interpersonal skills. The four steps represented by the acronym are:

- **L = Listen intently** – which is something we don't always do. If we're distracted or busy or we already have our mind made up, we tend not to listen carefully. When we let that happen, we tend to get off to the wrong start. That makes it less likely we'll reach a good conclusion.
- **A = Apologize with empathy** – you might be thinking, apologize for what? But when the kid says "this is the only place I have to hang out and meet my friends," you should be able to empathize with his situation and say you're sorry there aren't better options in this neighborhood. Showing you care is important.
- **S = Solve the problem** – this isn't always easy, but it's crucial to give people options and alternatives. Just telling the kid he has to go away isn't likely to achieve anything other than a short-term fix, and doesn't do anything for building relationships and trust.
- **T = Thank them** – this is just good manners and it shows respect. When the kid moves along, thank him for listening to you and for cooperating. Thank him for considering the needs of the business and its customers.

Needless to say, this won't bring every interaction to a happy ending. But using a technique like this, and generally using good interpersonal skills and procedural justice, will help make more interactions positive and build more public trust.

Slide 11

We've talked about how procedural justice and interpersonal skills are everyday policing practices that should be used in informal engagement as well as other policing situations. They correspond very closely with what we want to accomplish with community policing. Now let's mention one last key principle, fair &

- *But it assumes the kid is in the wrong, which might not be true.*
- *The kid would likely be resentful – we just broke trust instead of building it.*

Slide 10



The LAST Technique

- L = Listen intently
- A = Apologize with empathy
- S = Solve the problem
- T = Thank them

impartial policing.

You've studied FIP several times in recent years. You know that the aim is to do our work without bias, without discriminating against anyone. And you know that making assumptions about people based on what they look like, or their religion, or their gender is something that we all have a tendency to do. We all have biases, explicit and implicit.

Slide 12

Here's a matching exercise. Take just a minute and match them up. Write down your answers.

- Which one is the bus driver?
- Which one is the engineer?
- Which one is the counterfeiter?
- Which one is the EU Parliament member?

You probably figured, OK, they're trying to trick me. So you may have gone with counter-intuitive guesses. Or you may have tried to use logic. Either way, you had to be affected to some extent by stereotypes – all of us are, it's inevitable.

ASK: What stereotypes might have affected our answers in this case?

The reality is, any of these four people could have been in any of these occupations. Here are the correct answers:

- Bus driver – C
- Engineer – A
- Counterfeiter – D
- Parliament member – B

Slide 11

Fair & Impartial Policing

Doing our best to avoid letting bias affect our actions & decisions, by avoiding:

- Explicit bias
- Implicit bias
- Stereotypes
- Flawed perceptions
- Cynicism



Slide 12



Give the students a minute to write down their guesses. Then proceed.

Look for:

- *What role a woman might fill.*
- *What a criminal looks like.*
- *What an engineer looks like.*
- *Who wears their baseball cap backwards?*
- *What role a white guy in nice clothes might fill.*
- *What role an Asian-looking guy might fill.*

As representatives of the government and public servants, we have to work really hard to avoid letting biases affect how we police. This includes the way we talk to people, our body language, the decisions we make, and the way we serve the people we encounter day-in and day-out. We need to be very careful about making assumptions about people so we can be scrupulously fair and impartial.

III. EVALUATION/CLOSURE

This segment of the course mainly introduced the first basic component of community policing – informal engagement. It's a key ingredient in BPD's Community Policing Plan. We also talked about some everyday principles and practices that we can use during informal engagements.

Turn and Talk to the person next to you and discuss the following...

ASK: What are 3 take-aways for YOU from this session?

Time (2 minutes)

Slide 13



Instructor could have participants discuss in a group or with a partner. If there is time, invite 1 or 2 to share ONE of the take-aways for them.

Desired Responses:

- *Responses will vary but should be directly related to the content presented and to the satisfaction of the facilitator.*

If officers are reluctant to share, use the examples below to focus on important concepts.

Possible Examples:

- *Informal engagement refers to voluntary, proactive, positive interactions with the community. It helps build familiarity between officers and residents, establishes officers as a part of the community, builds community trust, and conveys policing as authentic, not mandated or forced.*
- *Being successful at informal engagement requires “soft skills” – what we sometimes call social skills or people skills. These skills are necessary to effectively policing, including community policing.*

Thoughts? Questions? Comments?

Break: 10 minutes

Slide 14

Break

We will now take a 10-minute break.

